

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 159602
ORIGIN NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 SSO-00 /027 R

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APPROVED BY S/AA:ALATHERTON
NEA/ARN:MDRAPER
NEA:RNEUMANN
S/S-O:SVALERGA

-----027646 231054Z /12

P R 222205Z JUN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 159602

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, JO, US

SUBJECT: BIN SHAKER'S MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ATHERTON

1. JORDANIAN CINC LT. GEN. ZAYD BIN SHAKER, IN WASHINGTON FOR THE U.S.-JORDAN JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION MEETINGS, MET WITH AMBASSADOR ATHERTON TUESDAY, JUNE 20. JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR SALAH AND DEFENSE ATTACHE BRIG. KHALED ALSO ATTENDED. THE CONVERSATION CENTERED ON MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS AND THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION REGARDING THE WEST BANK/GAZA ISSUE.

2. BIN SHAKER ASKED HOW THE U.S. SEES THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOLLOWING THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION.

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ATHERTON RESPONDED THAT, WHILE THE DECISION MADE NO BREAKTHROUGHS, IT IS ALSO NOT THE END OF THE ROAD. HE STATED THAT WE 'ILL CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO GET NEGOTIATIONS GOING, AND EXPECT TO MOVE WITHIN A SHORT TIME. WE HAVE NOT DECIDED SPECIFICALLY WHAT OUR NEXT STEPS IN RESPONSE TO THE ISRAELI STATEMENT WILL BE; WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR CLARIFICATION FROM THE ISRAELIS ON SOME ASPECTS OF THEIR

DECISION. ATHERTON SAID WE MUST CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE KEY ISSUE: THE QUESTION OF THE APPLICATION OF 242 TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AS IT IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD. THE ISRAELIS HAVE STATED THAT THE LANGUAGE IN THEIR STATEMENT

WAS A STEP FORWARD AND CONSISTENT WITH 242. WE BELIEVE THAT THE INTERIM PERIOD, A CONCEPT WE AGREE WITH, MUST BE USED TO WORK OUT FINAL ARRANGEMENTS BASED ON 242. OBJECT NOW IS TO GET THE NEGOTIATIONS GOING. WE THINK WHAT WAS STARTED LAST WINTER IS WORTH PRESERVING AND WISH TO MOVE TALKS FORWARD. WE WILL DECIDE ON OUR NEXT STEPS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. WE WILL NOT BE PASSIVE. ATHERTON POINTED OUT THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION WAS NOT THE END OF DEBATE IN ISRAEL ON THIS ISSUE; MUCH DEBATE WITHIN ISRAEL IS GOING ON NOW.

3. ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. WILL MAKE A MORE EXPLICIT STATEMENT ON THE ISRAELI DECISION, ATHERTON SAID WE BELIEVE IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO MAKE POINTS IN PRIVATE THAN IN PUBLIC. THE WRONG KIND OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO OUR GOAL OF GETTING NEGOTIATIONS MOVING.

4. ATHERTON POINTED OUT THAT ONE PROBLEM IN THE U.S. IS THAT MANY AMERICANS--EVEN THOSE WHO SUPPORT SADAT--BELIEVE THAT PARTIAL FAULT FOR THE STALEMATE IN NEGOTIATIONS LIES WITH SADAT FOR CALLING OFF THE JERUSALEM TALKS IN JANUARY. CONFIDENTIAL

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BIN SHAKER RESPONDED THAT WHILE PEOPLE MAY BLAME ALL SIDES, THE BASIC ISSUE IS THAT ISRAEL OCCUPIES ARAB LAND, AND ISRAEL CONTINUES TO GIVE NO SIGN THAT IT IS WILLING TO RESPECT 242.

5. THE RESUMPTION OF TALKS, ATHERTON EMPHASIZED, WILL ALLOW FOR AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND WILL GIVE US A GREATER CHANCE TO MAKE MAXIMUM USE OF OUR OWN PARTICIPATION. ATHERTON EXPRESSED HIS STRONG WISH THAT, IF THERE IS A RESUMPTION OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI CONTACTS, THERE WILL NOT BE FURTHER CRITICISM OF SADAT IN THE ARAB WORLD. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS HIS SPECIAL PLEA TO THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT.

6. ATHERTON WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE U.S. HAS SOME PROBLEM WITH THE ARAB POSITION REGARDING THE RETURN OF "EVERY INCH" OF TERRITORY. HE REITERATED THE U.S. BELIEF THAT THERE MUST BE ROOM FOR CONSIDERATION OF MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE BORDER MODIFICATIONS. BIN SHAKER AGREED THAT THE 1949 CEASEFIRE LINE WAS NOT IDEAL FROM MANY STANDPOINTS, AND THAT KING HUSSEIN WAS IN FAVOR OF MINOR MODIFICATIONS.

7. THERE FOLLOWED A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM. ATHERTON SAID THAT WE DO NOT WANT A RETURN TO A RIGIDLY PARTITIONED CITY, BUT THAT THIS WAS A DIFFICULT ISSUE, AND WE HAVE NOT DRAWN A DEFINITE PLAN FOR JERUSALEM AS YET. WE BELIEVE RESOLUTION OF THE OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO PEACE MUST COME FIRST, AND A RESOLUTION OF THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM WOULD THEN FOLLOW. AMBASSADOR SALAH STATED THAT WITHOUT A SOLUTION TO JERUSALEM, NO RESOLUTION OF THE OTHER ISSUES WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARABS. ATHERTON RESPONDED THAT IF IT WERE TO COME TO THE PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM HOLDING UP PEACE, WE BELIEVE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE JERUSALEM SETTLEMENT COULD BE FOUND.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY IO/UNA:BJSHARP
APPROVED BY IO/UNA:JFTEFFT
S/S-O:KDSCOTT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 159602

EXDIS FROM UNA

FOL RPT STATE 159602 ACTION AMMAN INFO TEL AVIV JERUSALEM
CAIRO 22 JUN 78 QUOTE

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UNQUOTE VANCE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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TAGS: PGOV, MASS, JO, US, (SHAKER, ZAYD BIN), (ATHERTON, ALFRED L JR)
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